

THE CO-OPERATIVE MAGAZINE.

(TO BE PUBLISHED QUARTERLY.)

No. VI. Vol. 3.]

OCTOBER, 1828.

[PRICE 1s.

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LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY HUNT AND CLARKE, YORK STREET;
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SOLD AT THE OFFICE OF THE LONDON CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY,
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(Where Communications for the Editor should be addressed.)

AT THE CO-OPERATIVE STORES OF BRIGHTON AND OF WORTHING; SUTHERLAND,
CALTON STREET, EDINBURGH; R. GRIFFIN AND CO., HUTCHINSON STREET,
GLASGOW; AT THE ORRISON STORE; J. LOFTUS, 107, PATRICK
STREET, CORK; A. M. GRAHAM, COLLEGE GREEN,
DUBLIN; AND J. MORTIMER, PHILADELPHIA.

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in this our age and nation received much ruder shocks than it had ever felt before ; and through the chinks and breaches of our prison, we see such glimmerings of light, and feel such refreshing airs of liberty, as daily raise our ardour for more. The miseries derived to mankind from superstition, under the name of religion, and of ecclesiastical tyranny under the name of church-government, have been clearly and usefully exposed. We begin to think and to act from reason and from nature alone. This is true of several, but still is by far the majority in the same old state of blindness and slavery ; and much is it to be feared that we shall perpetually relapse ; whilst the real productive cause of all this superstitious folly, enthusiastical nonsense, and holy tyranny, holds a reverend place in the estimation even of those who are otherwise enlightened."—*Burke's Works*, 1809. vol. i. p. 12.

Bruce Castle Establishment, Tottenham.

THIS seminary or college, if superior excellence or an identity of interests and feelings may jus-

tify that denomination, is conducted by Messrs. Hills, the same gentlemen whose success at the celebrated school at Hazelwood has excited the admiration of the first critics of the day. We have had the pleasure of visiting the establishment at Tottenham ; and although our time was too limited to permit a minute inspection, we were truly gratified in observing the diligence and delight displayed by the pupils in the prosecution of their studies. The scholars are to a great extent self-governed ; for although the preceptors assist in the deliberations of the senior boys upon any proposed change in the order of their proceedings, yet they appear simply in the character of friendly advisers : they are appealed to, and their decisions examined with feelings of regard and confidence. We cannot dilate further at present upon this highly interesting subject ; but we hope soon to repeat our visit, and to present our readers with a better and more detailed account of the principles and practice of Bruce Castle, an establishment which affords one of the most successful and splendid examples in the science of education.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We have sought in vain for a copy of the Athenæum referred to by our correspondent H. P. who will oblige us by transcribing the passage on the " Inequality of Conditions."

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[Vol. III.

ARISTOTLE *versus* PLATO.

Sebastian. No marrying among his subjects?

Antonio. None, man; all idle; whores and knaves.

TEMPEST. Act. II. Sc. 1.

FROM the concluding paragraph of my last Essay, you would perceive that I was very doubtful whether or not I had clearly apprehended the scheme of polity designed by Socrates and Plato, in the dialogues respectively intitled *The Republic*, and *The Laws*. On referring to *The Politics* of Aristotle, it would appear, that with all the advantages which he possessed, he was, equally with myself, at a loss to discover what were the exact intentions of those philosophers in many important particulars. He observes*, that Socrates has determined nothing respecting the property and the women of the class of husbandmen and artificers,—whether they are to be common, or private. If private, then, says Aristotle, two contrary states of society will subsist in the same city. For Socrates makes the guardians to be as it were, keepers; and the husbandmen, artificers, and others, to be citizens: but accusations, litigations, and all such other evils as he says exist in other cities, will also be found in his; though So-

crates says, they (the husbandmen, artificers, &c.) will not be in want of many laws on account of their education, but such only as may be necessary for regulating the streets, the markets, and the like; while at the same time, he is most careful to regulate the minutest concerns of the guardians. Nor, says Aristotle, does he make the guardians happy by the discipline which he has established for them: and yet his avowed object is to promote the happiness of the whole city; which however is impossible, unless the greater number possess felicity. Moreover, if the guardians are not happy, who else are so? For the artificers are not, nor the multitude of those who are employed in sordid occupations.

The inhabitants of his city, observes Aristotle†, are divided by Socrates into two parts, viz. into husbandmen and the belligerent part; and from these he selects a third part, whose province it is to consult and deliberate, and to have the principal authority in the city. But with respect to husbandmen and artificers, whether they are to have any share in the government, or to be entrusted with arms and employed in war, Socrates has determined nothing: and with respect to other things, he has filled his treatise with mat-

* Book II.

† Book II. Chap. 6.

ter foreign to the purpose. All his discourses however are excellent, elegant, new and curious.

The Laws of Plato, which were written afterwards, are, in Aristotle's opinion, liable to nearly the same objections as the treatise on the Republic.

With respect to a community of goods and of women, Aristotle* observes, that it is not at all adapted to produce concord. For that which is common to many, has the least attention paid to it, since men regard what is their own much more than what is common to others, and pay attention to that which every man has peculiar to himself. Let every citizen have a thousand children, and let none of them be exclusively regarded as his own proper offspring, and all of them will be similarly neglected. It is better for a man to be a nephew in his private capacity, than a son after that manner. Moreover, it is not possible to prevent some persons from suspecting their relationship, as brothers and sisters, fathers and children, owing to similarity of features and conformation. Thus, in Upper Africa, where women are common, the children are distinguished by their resemblances, and delivered to their respective fathers. The affection must, however, be necessarily very weak, where a son cannot say confidently, This is my father; or a father, This is my son. For as a little of what is sweet, when mixed with a great quantity of water, is imperceptible through the mixture, so also, all family connections, and the names by which they are distinguished, will be disregarded in such a community. To these forcible objec-

tions of Aristotle, it may be added, that unless mothers are to be deprived of their children as soon as they are born, which would be a most cruel and unnatural act, the mothers must necessarily know their own children, and consequently entertain and cherish those partialities which Plato wished to eradicate from the minds of his citizens.

"Domestic society," observes a celebrated divine† of modern times, "is the seminary of social affections, the cradle of sensibility, where the first elements are acquired of that tenderness and humanity which cement mankind together. The order of nature is evermore from particulars to generals. As, in the operations of intellect, we proceed from the contemplation of individuals, to the formation of general abstractions; so, in the development of the passions, we advance from private to public affections. From the love of parents, brothers and sisters, to those more expanded regards which embrace the immense society of human kind. Certain philosophers would invert this order. They propose to build general benevolence on the destruction of individual tenderness, and to make us love the whole species more, by loving every particular part of it less."

To return to Aristotle‡. In the next place, says he, we have to consider in what manner property ought to be regulated among those who are to be governed after the best manner; viz. whether it should be common, or not. I mean, whether it is better that property should be held separate, or that not only possessions, but

† The Rev. Mr. Hall of Leicester.

‡ Book II. Chap. 5.

* Book II. Chap. 3.

the use of them, should be in common; or that the lands should have a particular owner, but that the produce should be brought together, and used as one common stock, as some nations do at present; or, on the contrary, whether the land should be common, and should be cultivated in common, while the produce of it is divided for the particular use of the inhabitants, which is said to be practised by some barbarians;—or should both the land and the produce of it be common? On either of these plans, it must necessarily happen, that those who reap little and labour much, will complain of those who enjoy and take a large share of the produce, and yet labour but little. In short, it is the most difficult of all human concerns, to live together, and have all things in common. And this is evident from that community which is formed by those who go out to settle a colony; for they are apt to disagree very much on the most common occasions, and to come to blows about trifles.

If any one should arrange property so as to afford a moderate sufficiency to each, it would be of no use*: for it is of more importance to the peace and happiness of a community, that there should be an equalization of desires, than of property. This can only be effected when the citizens are sufficiently disciplined by good laws; for in that case the well-disposed will not wish to have more than would fall to their share if property were equally distributed; and those who are ill-disposed will be prevented from acquiring an excess of property.

* Book II. Chap. 7.

We find from experience, that men do not acquire and preserve the virtues by external goods, but external goods by the virtues; and that a happy life is more frequently the lot of those who with moderate wealth have cultivated their minds and exercised their reasoning powers, than of those who possess much wealth, but are deficient in the goods of the mind.

The main object of Aristotle's work† is to show, by what means the liberties of the citizens may be best preserved. With this view, he descants very learnedly and acutely upon the characters of various descriptions of commonwealths. It was, however, foreign from my purpose to follow him in his review of the tyrannies, monarchies, oligarchies, democracies and polities‡, to which he alludes, except in so far as his observations bear upon the advantages and disadvantages of the scheme devised by Socrates and Plato. I have already adduced his objections to a community of property and of wives; and I shall now merely attempt to cull from his writings a few particulars respecting societies among whom the principle alluded to was more or less operative; and also such of his observations relating to other matters, as attracted my attention.

Aristotle§ tells us, that the establishment of common tables was more ancient than the age of Minos king of Crete: for, says he, the learned men of Italy state,

† Book VII. Chap. 1.

‡ According to Aristotle, a Polity, which he considers to be the best form of government, is a mixture of an oligarchy and a democracy. (Book IV. Chap. 8.)

§ Book VII. Chap. 10.

that one Italus, king of Oenotria, made the Oenotrians—who were formerly shepherds — husbandmen; and gave them laws different from what they had before, and was the first that established common tables; which Aristotle, although adverse to a community of property, admits to be useful in well-regulated cities.—He informs us *, that among the Lacedæmonians, every man brought his own † portion to the feast; and that the very poor, being unable to bear the expense of these entertainments, were on that account excluded from them. These matters were better ordered in Crete, where the tables were maintained at the public expense ‡: there, all the corn and cattle, taxes and contributions, furnished by the inhabitants, were arranged into parts, one of which was appointed for the worship of the gods, another for the exigencies of the state, and the third for the common tables; so that all the women, children and men, were supported from a common stock. The Carthaginians had also their common tables, and their institutions were in other respects very similar to those of the Cretans and Lacedæmonians.

The Lacedæmonian legislator Lycurgus, established every thing with a view to victory and war §; and in consequence of being exercised in dangers, the Lacedæmonians obtained an extensive command. But it is necessary that men should not only be capable of engaging in war, but be fitted for the enjoyment of peace and leisure. When the Lacedæmonians ceased to possess supreme

power among the Grecian republics, they ceased to be happy, and therefore their legislator was not a good one. It is not proper to pay attention to warlike exercises for the sake of enslaving those who do not deserve to be made slaves; but in order that the people may not be enslaved by others, and that they may maintain a due degree of ascendancy over those who are their inferiors in the art of governing. Peace is the end of war, and leisure of business ||. Fortitude and endurance are necessary for the purposes of war and of business: but philosophy for the purposes of peace and of leisure. Hence the proverb, *Leisure is not for slaves.*

I shall now select some detached sentences which indicate Aristotle's notions respecting the requisites of social happiness. A city, he says ¶, is a society of people living happily with their families and children, for the sake of a life which is perfect and sufficient of itself. It is however dubious what that which has the supreme power in the city ought to be; whether it should be the multitude, or the rich, or the worthy, or one person who is the best of all the citizens **. It is possible that the many, each of which is not a worthy man, may, when collected together, be better than the worthy few, just as public suppers exceed those which are given at the expense of one person: for being many, each has a portion of virtue and prudence, and thus assembling together, they become like one man made up of a multitude, consisting of many feet, many hands, and many senses.

* Book II. Chap. 9.

† 1 Corinth. Chap. xi. ver. 21.

‡ Book II. Chap. 10.

§ Book VII. Chap. 14.

|| Book VII. Chap. 15.

¶ Book III. Chap. 9.

** Chap. 11.

In all cities there are three parts: 1st, the very rich; 2nd, the very poor; 3rd, the middling class, which are the happiest of all. On this account Phocylides prayed well, when he says, The middle state is best*;—this state be mine. It is evident therefore, that the best political community is that in which the middle class is the most numerous; for in such communities seditions and discords are rare.

The primary consideration with a statesman should be, of what number of people and what kind of persons a city ought to consist†. It is evident from facts, that it is difficult, not to say impossible, to govern properly a very numerous body of men. Of all the polities, therefore, which appear to be well governed, we do not see that any one of them is excessively populous. There is a certain measure of magnitude to cities as to all other things. A ship which is only a span in length will not be a ship, nor yet one of two furlongs in length.

When I had proceeded thus far in my Aristotelian researches, circumstances arose which compelled me to suspend them. Probably your readers will think that I have already given them rather too many of these "wise saws", and will be glad to be spared the task of reading any more of them. If so, I shall hasten to "modern instances."

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

PHILADELPHUS.

June 4th, 1828.

* Proverbs, Chap. xxx. ver. 8.

† Book VII. Chap. 4.

DIRECT TAXATION.

[Extract from a manuscript intitled, "Outline of a New Community of Equitable and Mutual Co-operation; that would be exempt from nearly all the evils which at present afflict Civilized Society; and that would create demands for Labour,—Free and PRODUCTIVE Labour, to an infinite extent; and pour out Blessings upon mankind truly incalculable."]

"In lieu of taxation of all kinds, as at present in operation, let the members of the *New Community* endeavour to arrange with the government of the country in which it may be commenced, for the payment of an equivalent, somewhat thus: say, for Great Britain:—

	To the Government.	To the Church.
1st Year,	2s. 6d.	0s. 5d.
2nd ditto,	5 0	0 10
3rd ditto,	10 0	1 8
4th ditto,	15 0	2 6
5th ditto,	20 0	3 4
6th ditto,	25 0	4 2
7th ditto and afterwards,	30 0	5 0

per acre of land, for the whole belonging to the *New Community*.*

"And should the aggregate taxation of the empire be increased beyond sixty millions per annum, upon the members of *Old Society*; then, for every additional million, let the members of the *New* pay an additional sixpence per acre to the *State*, and one penny per acre to the *Church fund*; and the reverse to take place upon every decrease of taxation upon the members of *Old Society*.

* N. B. The *Government* to receive the *WHOLE*, and pay the *Church party* the equivalents for tythes, &c. &c.

"The waste lands in Great Britain and Ireland are estimated at twenty-six millions of acres. Now as the bulk of the people likely to join the New Community, will be such as at present have not the means of paying much to the state by way of taxation; and as the land that would be occupied by them, would be WASTE LAND, as it were, or land in addition to what is now under cultivation,—it must be evident that payments of the kind proposed (be the extent of them whatever they may), would be a NET GAIN to the funds of both the *Exchequer* and the *Church*. Were twenty million acres of WASTE LANDS occupied on these terms, (and why should they not be so occupied instead of the waste lands of OTHER countries; since the people and the means are immediately upon the spot?) it would yield an annual revenue of thirty millions sterling to the State, and five millions to the Church (at the option of the State), in addition to the present amount of taxation upon the people! This may form a real and efficient SINKING FUND for demolishing the present 'National Debt' of the country!!

"By estimating the equivalents for taxation upon land, it would be more equitable than if it were attempted by means of a poll-tax on the people of the New Community; because, if the tax were upon people, they may then occupy as many acres of land as they thought proper, which would be giving them advantages for their results in the general market; and hence they may probably escape an equitable portion of taxation, which the members of the proposed new state of things must not desire to do. But, by put-

ting the tax upon the acre of land, they could never injure others in *Old Society*, because they (the members of *New Society*) MUST, and WOULD occupy a sufficiency of land for their entire support; and hence they MUST pay an equitable and full share of taxation to both the *Church* and the *State*.

"Now, after contemplating the above statements, and also the following ones, it is impossible to imagine that any reasonable objections will ever be started to the community proposed, and therefore the sooner it be set about, the better for all parties it will prove; for it would be the sure and certain means of effecting the following most important objects, viz:—

"1st, It would save to the country the millions of money intended for transporting, under the name of *emigration*, the APPARENT excess of people of Great Britain and Ireland, to the wilds and inhospitable shores and climes of Canada, Nova Scotia, &c. &c.

"2nd, It would save the millions of money now collected as *Poor Rates*; and which money at present is frequently employed in the debasement of the morals of the people, in various ways.

"3rd, It would save millions of money, which at present is little better than thrown away upon *charity*, although by its donors contributed with the best of intentions.

"4th, It would CREATE wealth to the value of millions of money, and that entirely from LANDS and LABOUR which at present are of little or no value.

"5th, It would, in the most unobjectionable manner possible, rescue millions of people from ig-

ignorance, crime, misery, idleness, starvation, and death.

"6th, It would give full and profitable employ to millions of people, who now do very little better than 'labour in vain.'

"7th, It would emancipate millions of people from the evils at present resulting from an apparent excess of population, and a real excess of labour beyond what is denominated a profitable demand for it, but which in fact, is an excess quite as imaginary as the superabundance of people of which the *Economists* complain.

"Any petition to the Government, therefore, with these advantages as its express objects, could not fail of receiving immediately, due attention and consideration, and ultimately, every possible encouragement and support; for this plain reason, EVERY BODY would be benefited in the result,—from the highest to the lowest,—from the richest to the poorest,—from the pensioner to the pauper,—from the king even unto the beggar."

ADDRESS,

Delivered by ROBERT OWEN at a public meeting of the inhabitants of New Harmony, on Sunday, April 13, 1828.

[From an American Paper.]

SINCE I left you, I have made another visit to the old world, to see what had been doing there in my absence. I found the same overwhelming causes of distress in full activity that were in progress when I left it, and which causes had been continually advancing for several years previously:—I mean inventions and discoveries to supersede manual labour in all the principal departments of life, and an increase of

poverty among the producers of real wealth in proportion to the increase which had been made in these scientific improvements. Every step in this progress tends to accumulate large masses of useless wealth in the hands of a few individuals, and to withdraw it from the industrious producer.

The necessary consequence of a diminution of manual labour is an increase of crime; which again necessarily produces through all the ramifications of society, from the lowest to the highest, an increase of misery. The only remedy proposed in Great Britain by the united wisdom of its parliament, is to induce a spirit of emigration among the producing classes. And while the individual system shall prevail, a continued emigration will be their only relief.

The United States are following the example of Great Britain in its rapidity of production; and they will soon experience many of its evils. The productions of this continent which are necessary to the best state of human existence, will very shortly be in such abundance as to exceed the demand for them; and as soon as that period shall arrive, manual labour will decrease in value, and the non-producers will become the lords and oppressors. Experience has proved that the happiness of states is always in proportion to the equality of their population in knowledge and wealth; but the system in progress in the United States tends to form an aristocracy composed of the priesthood, the lawyers, and the wealthy; and threatens to produce a state of society the least calculated to promote the general welfare and happiness of any population.

These are the evils to be guard-

ed against. On the other hand, there are many reasons to rejoice in the prospect of the future. Owing to various causes, knowledge in the old as in the new world is making a silent yet sure progress among the mass of the people. The introduction of Infant Schools and Mechanic Institutes, and their almost daily increase in Great Britain, imperfect as the new modes of instruction are, is effecting such a gradual change in the minds of the superior producing classes, as will enable them, ere long, to give a new and very different direction to the progress of inventions and discoveries, which at present threaten to overwhelm them and their posterity.

Superstition, also, among the enlightened part of society, is rapidly on the decline; Free-Press Associations are becoming popular, and the minds of the better informed among the middle classes are daily collecting strength to throw off the shackles of religious oppression, together with the deception and vice which these every where produce. A little longer, and the priesthood will have no influence over any portion of the population, except the most ignorant, and those who are compelled to become hypocrites to gain elections into office to obtain a livelihood. No one but these will believe, or pretend to believe, that a Power infinitely wise and good, and who does all things by his might, should, knowing what he was about, make a devil to counteract his own operations, and create human beings to disobey his express wishes and commands. None but irrational beings could be made to believe, or rather to think they believe, these or any

such palpable contradictions and absurdities.

The time is at hand when the priesthood will discover that they individually suffer, and grievously too, by teaching mankind these degrading errors, and keeping men, in consequence, so profoundly ignorant as we find them at this day. They will, I conclude, now speedily perceive the mistake which they have made, and pursue a different and much wiser course. They must do so shortly, or they will find the whole of the intelligent part of society opposed to them. Let them instruct the people in real knowledge that might be of use to them, instead of filling their minds with imaginary notions of useless speculations about incomprehensible superstitions, and they will then render their fellow-creatures a real and permanent service. At present they are a stumbling-block in the way of every valuable improvement. They are an incubus, pressing the population of all countries down to the lowest point of mental degradation and vice, and rendering the rational faculties of mankind a continued curse to the world,—those faculties which under a different direction might become an invaluable blessing.

The priesthood will make this change in their conduct speedily, or they will prepare themselves to enter into an open mental conflict with the most intelligent and conscientious of the human race. It is my opinion that they will act rationally, and adopt the former alternative, and every facility ought to be offered them to do so with the least inconvenience. The world had better pay them twice or ten times as much for instruct-

ing it in what is true, than pay them as it does at present for perpetuating ignorance, poverty and vice, by destroying the reason of man.

From the facts and considerations which I have now stated, my conviction is, that the general progress of knowledge and decline of superstition among the people of Europe and the United States, will speedily effect a great change for the better, in their condition. Men cannot proceed much further in the acquisition of real knowledge, without discovering what things are necessary for human happiness, and what is the shortest and best method to obtain them permanently; without being, as at present, dependent for them on the will of a few capricious wealthy individuals, who derive all their power and influence from the ignorance and industry of the many whom they oppress.

It is full time that these grievous evils should terminate. To hasten this period, I left Europe to come here, where the greater freedom of the constitution on the subject of religion, admitted experiments to be tried for the benefit of the human race, which could not be attempted, with any reasonable prospect of success, where superstition is the law of the land. I came here with a determination to try what could be effected in this new country to relieve my fellow men from superstition and mental degradation; so that if successful, the experiment should be an example which all might follow, and by which all might benefit.

I tried here a new course, for which I was induced to hope that fifty years of political liberty had

prepared the American population: that is,—to govern themselves advantageously. I supplied land, houses, and the use of much capital; and I tried, each in their own way, all the different parties who collected here; but experience proved that the attempt was premature, to unite a number of strangers not previously educated for the purpose, who should carry on extensive operations for their common interest and live together as a common family. I afterwards tried, before my last departure hence, what could be done by those who associated through their own choice, and in small numbers: to these I gave leases of large tracts of land for ten thousand years upon a nominal rent, and for moral conditions only; and these I did expect would have made a progress during my absence; but now, upon my return, I find that the habits of the individual system were so powerful, that these leases have been, with a few exceptions, applied for individual purposes and individual gain; and in consequence, they must return again into my hands.

This last experiment has made it evident that *families* trained in the individual system, founded as it is upon superstition, have not acquired those moral qualities of forbearance and charity for each other, which are necessary to promote full confidence and harmony among all the members, and without which communities cannot exist. Communities, to prosper permanently, must consist of persons devoid of prejudice, and possessed of moral feelings in unison with the laws of human nature.

All systems of religion train men to be prejudiced, to be without charity, and to be opposed to

each other. With these qualities they never can unite as brethren of one family, having one interest and sincere kind feelings for each other.

But is the population of the world to be left in this miserable and hopeless state? If *all* we desire cannot be effected for this generation, so as to produce honesty, industry, intelligence, independence and happiness, by reason of the habits and feelings that have arisen out of their superstitious training; ought we to abandon them and their offspring to their errors and miseries? Ought we not rather to redouble our exertions to stop that evil from proceeding any further, and never be weary in well doing? If we cannot do all now, let us do whatever is practicable; and make as great an advance towards the right road as we can make with the means we possess.

From all I have seen since I left you, I am more than ever convinced of the necessity for the change from the individual to the social system; and through some difficulties with patience and perseverance unyielding, the present generation may yet obtain many of the benefits which their children may be prepared to enjoy in comparative perfection.

To effect this change, a course must be adopted different from what I originally intended. It was my wish not to engage again in any affairs of business, but to leave all pecuniary matters to the management of others, and to make arrangements to be always at liberty to go and spread the knowledge of the principles on which the Social System is founded, far and near, that vice and misery might upon an extensive

scale be the more speedily reduced. I must, however, now make some modifications of my proceedings, in consequence of many parties here, during my absence, having acted in opposition to my views, and to the principles of the Social System, instead of promoting them, as they were bound to do by their promises and engagements, and as I expected they would, because it was their interest to do so.

Some of you that remained here under the individual system have complained that during my absence a monopoly has existed in some departments, which has retarded your individual success; and the neighbouring communities have also complained since my return that they have been injured by it. I fear there has been some foundation for these complaints; but it is probable that these statements have been exaggerated by the over-excited feelings of the suffering parties.

It is necessary, however, now to declare distinctly, that hereafter there may be no mistake upon a subject of so much interest,—that it was never my intention to establish any injurious monopoly, nor to grant such monopoly to any one: And every individual has always been, as now, at full liberty to dispose of the produce of his own labour in any way he may choose.

But, on the other hand, it was no part of my plan, by the introduction of petty stores and whiskey shops, to encourage competition, which produces as many evils as monopoly, and is equally contrary to the Social system. The party permitted to sell foreign produce, promised on making the engagement for the premises in which

the monopoly is said to have existed, that the business should be conducted, as it had been previously managed, as much for the benefit of the town as for the proprietors.

In these respects I have been disappointed, and the business through errors of judgement has been conducted, I fear, too often more with a view to pecuniary gain of the individual proprietors, than for the mutual benefit of the surrounding population.

[Robert Owen then adverted to other occurrences which took place in his absence; but, as these are of a more local nature, it appears unnecessary to detail them. He proceeded:]

Now as the foundation of all improvements in the condition of mankind must be founded on principles of strict justice and honesty of purpose, and as I wish to improve the condition of my fellow-creatures, I early made these my principles of conduct, from which I have never knowingly deviated in a single instance.

I lament that any such occurrences should have taken place;—had I anticipated any such, I would have adopted more restrictive measures.

They have, however, occurred,—and what is now best to be done? Shall I be angry and irritated with my fellow beings, because they have been ignorant of their real interests? with the principles which I deem so true and valuable for the promotion of virtue and happiness; would this conduct be rational in me? I can only feel regret instead of anger; I will, if I can, turn these errors to the benefit of all. My time has been employed for this purpose, since my return. I have been

collecting all the facts that may enable me to form a correct judgement of what is now best to be done. I have not yet obtained all the facts necessary for my purpose, and that is the reason why I have not sooner met you in public. I am still fully occupied in ascertaining what can be done under the existing circumstances to secure the great object which I came here to put into practice; and I have reason to believe, that arrangements may now be formed that will promote it; that will prepare a solid foundation for the Social System, and materially benefit all who honestly desire to support it. When these arrangements shall be fully determined upon, I will again meet you and explain them, in order that all shall understand what is intended to be done.

But this much is certain, that as far as my influence can extend, there shall be no injurious monopoly here; there shall be no attempt to take advantage of any one, or to do any one an injustice. These are common vulgar evils which ought not to exist, where an honest attempt is made to improve the condition of mankind.

My intention now is to form such arrangements on the estate of Harmony as will enable those who desire to promote the practice of the Social System to live in separate families on the individual system, and yet to unite their general labour, or to exchange labour for labour, on the most beneficial terms for all; or to do both or neither as their feelings or apparent interest may influence them. While other arrangements shall be formed to enable them to have their children trained from infancy in a knowledge of the

principles of human nature and of the laws which govern it ; and in consequence, trained in such improved habits, manners, and disposition, as will prepare them to adopt, with ease and pleasure, the co-operative and social system, and to enjoy its innumerable advantages.

By these measures I hope there will be brought around us by degrees, an honest and industrious and also a well-educated population, with right feelings and views, who will earnestly endeavour to promote the happiness of each other, and unite in bringing up their children as one family, with simple manners, temperate habits, and useful knowledge, both in principles and practice.

Those who have a knowledge of human nature, who have been permitted to overcome the prejudices early forced into their minds, and who have a real affection for their fellow beings, will not be discouraged by any obstacles, but will persevere to the end.

R. OWEN.

TRADING ASSOCIATIONS.

WE are happy to find that these establishments are in general advancing with considerable success, and increasing in number. The Brighton Co-operative Trading Association is in a flourishing state ; and the managers have renewed applications from parties at Kingstanley near Stroudwater, and at Belper near Derby, as well as from Birmingham, for instructions in forming similar societies. A Correspondent observes that "the purchase of materials and employment of their own members on their growing capital, should be one of the first

steps taken by such associations after their successful establishment ; and combined with this, or even independently of it, the labour for labour exchanges might be begun."

THOUGHTS ON THE INEQUALITY OF CONDITIONS.

To the Editor of the Co-operative Magazine.

SIR,

ONE of the most interesting and striking pictures that I am acquainted with of the consequences of the system of Private Property, or, as it is now called, the Competitive System, I have just met with whilst looking over the pages of the Athenæum, edited by Dr. Aikin twenty years ago, in "Thoughts on the Inequality of Conditions." (Vol. ii. p. 14.)

From the signature, A. L. B. as well as from the vigour and beauty both of thought and diction, there can be no doubt that it is from the pen of Mrs. Barbauld. As it has not been inserted (perhaps from the boldness of its speculations) in the collection of her works published since her decease, and as the publication in which it appeared is in few hands, will you allow a well-wisher to your important work to recommend the insertion of it? Happy will it be for mankind if they can now get sight of a remedy for the ills which, though so fully seen and forcibly depicted by this distinguished moralist, appear to have been considered by her as hopeless of a cure.

H. P.

"There is nothing which a humane and considerate mind con-

templates with more pain, than the great inequality with which the advantages and enjoyments of life are dealt out to different classes of men. I mean to take these terms in their common acceptance, and to understand by the enjoyments of life, a plentiful table, lightsome and well-furnished apartments, apparel of delicate manufacture, power to command the attendance of others, and freedom from any obligation to coarse or disgusting employments; to labour that exhausts life, or privations that render it of little value. To these may be added a share of deference, respect, a facility of access to objects of taste and curiosity, with all those other circumstances through which the rich feel their superiority over the poor. I know very well that with philosophers these advantages are of little or no account; they can prove by many learned and logical arguments that external goods have nothing to do with happiness, which resides exclusively in the mind. We are therefore bound to believe that these gentlemen, though they appear to enjoy a good table, or an elegant carriage as well as their neighbours, in fact regard them with perfect indifference; for which reason I beg to be considered as only addressing those who share in the common feelings of mankind, and who are therefore apt, at times, to repine that in the common blessings of it there should exist so striking a disproportion.

“The honourable origin of this disproportion is *industry*. By the order of Providence the advantages of life are made the reward of diligence, active exertion, and superior talent. According as a

man is distinguished by these, his share will of course increase at the expence of his weaker or more indolent neighbour. But this alone would not account for the prodigious accumulation which by degrees takes place, were it not that this larger share generates *power*; and here begins the mischief, for power embanks and confines the riches which otherwise would disperse and flow back in various channels to the community at large. Power enables the indolent and the useless not only to retain, but to add to their possessions, by taking from the industrious the natural reward of *their* labour, and applying it to their own use. It enables them to limit the profits and exact the services of the rest of the community, and to make such an unnatural separation between the enjoyment of a thing and the power of producing it, that where we see the one, we are habitually led to infer the privation of the other. The sinews of industry become relaxed by the plenty it produces, but the gripe of power is firm; and can only be unloosed by power. All the fences of law are provided, all the watchfulness of suspicion is awakened, all the salutary prejudices are cherished which may serve to keep down those who are already undermost, and to secure to those who have once acquired them the enjoyments and advantages of life. Since things are so, how is it, it may be asked, that they are not worse? How is it that this continual tendency to accumulation has not long ago centered in a few hands all that is valuable in life? To solve this difficulty we must recollect, that as in the material, so in the moral world, there are

opposite laws and tendencies which counteract each other, so that the weaker, though it never can subdue the stronger, yet acts as a continual check upon it, and serves to prevent it from ever passing a certain point. In this light I have often considered with pleasure those levelling principles which are constantly at work, and prevent the accumulating principle, not indeed from preponderating to a degree that often shocks humanity, but at least from entirely destroying the balance of society.

"The first of these levelling principles is, the number of adventitious wants and infirmities which take possession of a rich man, and make him dependent on those who administer to them. The enjoyments of sense are limited, those of fancy are infinite. If the rich had no fantastic wants, it is probable no more poor would be suffered to subsist in a country than would suffice to procure a plentiful subsistence for the owners of the soil; just as we maintain no more oxen than will serve for food, or horses than are wanted for the draft or the saddle; the rest of the land would lie uncultivated, as indeed it does, whenever those who possess the property of it are not stimulated by some advantage to themselves to make it productive. In conformity with this idea, we always use the phrase of *a numerous poor, a burdensome poor, a country overstocked with poor*, whenever, from any accidental overflow, they happen to exist in greater numbers than we can conveniently use. But in general, where taste and fashion exist, their various demands are drawing off, by numberless little channels, that wealth

which its possessor would not otherwise be induced to part with. Nor is mere subsistence all that is thus gained; those tastes, to supply which talent is required, require also education, they require a certain degree of affluence, they bring the different ranks into contact with each other. The rude hind from his mud-walled cottage may raise corn for the table of the nobleman; but if the latter chooses to have an artist, he must occasionally admit him to that table. Leonardo da Vinci died in the arms of Francis the First. The wants of taste, and they alone, supply a gradation of ranks; for the man who is able to administer to the more refined pleasures of life, himself requires to be placed several rounds above the foot of the ladder.

"Another levelling principle, akin to the former, is that *personal consequence* which is the result of personal capacity and experience. Of this no artificial state of society, no station of inferiority, not even a state of slavery itself, can entirely divest its possessor. Skill is power. The owner of a large house and domain may call himself, if he pleases, the master of them, and in a certain sense he is so, for all his dependents are labouring for him; but he cannot deprive his steward, his butler, his gardener, his cook, even his dairy-maid, of that importance which arises from their understanding what he does not understand. He may give general orders, but if he attempts to interfere in the management of their departments, he will find himself become the object of their contempt instead of their reverence. If he talks with his gardener about fruit walls, or with his house-

keeper about setting out an entertainment, he will find they are the people of consequence, and that the wages he pays them will not prevent their telling him with an air of authority, 'Sir, you must do so and so.' So well is this understood, that workmen of all kinds are the acknowledged masters of those who employ them; and the man who directs the affairs of a kingdom, if he wants to repair his house, is obliged to submit with the conscious littleness of ignorance to the impositions of his bricklayer, mason and carpenter. Some kinds of authority may be usurped, but the authority which arises from technical skill never can.

"Another circumstance which serves to lessen the superiority of the rich is, the *number of restraints* which they themselves, as rich people, lie under. A rich man has a kind of enchanted circle drawn about him, out of which he can no more move than the poor man out of his sphere. He is forbidden, by the custom of the community, from making use of his talents and activity, except in his own department. He is interdicted the use of fire and water, except by the ministration of others. He is as really prohibited, and under as severe penalties (the penalties of disgrace and universal odium) from carrying a parcel, or cleaning his own shoes, or currying his own horse, as the poor man is forbidden any office for which he is incapacitated by his indigence. With regard to women, particularly, the restraints laid upon them in what is called civilized society by the despot *Qu'en dirat-on?* (What will people say?) make their whole lives a series of constraint and sacri-

fices. 'I should be glad to walk in the fields,' says the poor sempstress, 'but I cannot, for I have not finished my task;' 'I should be glad to walk in the fields,' says the young lady, 'but I cannot possibly go, for the footman who should walk behind me is not at leisure.' The poor woman, whose thin and scanty garment is not sufficient to defend her from the blasts of winter, suffers, no doubt, from the cold; and so does the young lady of fashion, who is also obliged, by that fashion from whence she derives her importance, to shiver in a thin and scanty garment, and to expose her health by encountering without sufficient covering the noxious damp of the midnight air. A man who is born rich, consequently in a certain rank of society, finds the greatest part of his income appropriated to expenses which he is not the master to indulge or to restrain, and is forced, in spite of himself, to diffuse largely around him the bounties of Providence which, perhaps, if not thus constrained, he would be willing to confine to the narrow circle of his own enjoyments. He must not only support those who work for him, but all who approach his person must share the affluence and luxury in which he lives; if he eats white bread, his servants will not eat brown; though, perhaps, his tenants may. His own pride, his own comfort, require that all who are within the circle of contact should have an air of neatness, decorous manners, and harmonize by their appearance with the principal object in the piece; as the approaches to a nobleman's mansion must indicate from afar the grandeur of the place. Neither will the

sensibilities of cultured life bear to have misery intrude too near the eye; the distress which might languish at a distance, will be amply relieved if it comes near enough to affect the nerves. There is a happy contagion in wealth, which spreads itself to the remotest circle of its influence. 'No one liveth to himself,' is exemplified by the rich man, whether he intend it or not.

"It is true, this tendency is very much strengthened by another principle, *the secret combination of the poor against the rich*. There is in man an obscure sense of natural equality, which, without much reasoning, impresses on the mind a tacit conviction that some can spare a great deal, and that others want a great deal. Every body, therefore, who is not a party concerned, is rather glad than otherwise when the stores of the rich are lessened by overcharges, extravagant bills, and a number of little impositions, which he is continually exposed to. 'He can well afford it, the expense is nothing to him,' is the common language on such occasions. The inferior classes are quick in seizing this advantage, and it is well understood that a rich or a titled man pays more than another for whatever he has. The best thing he can do is to submit with a good grace, for if he is strict in insisting upon his right, he loses his character as a gentleman. Laws are continually made against combinations, but the secret combination of the low against the high can never be prevented, because it is founded on the interest of the many, and the moral sense of all.

"These various causes are thus continually at work, draining off,

as it were, the superfluous moisture, and dewing with it the parched and barren field; still, much more misery would be suffered than is suffered, if it were not for another corrective which Providence has caused to exist, in the vices of mankind. That private vices are public benefits, may be thought a dangerous doctrine; but as vice exists, the fact surely tends to vindicate the divine government in permitting it; and I think it must be clear to a reflecting mind, that, *cæteris mantibus*, so strong a sense of principle as would entirely prevent the lower orders from preying upon the property of the higher, would be a curse and not a blessing. When, with these sentiments, I read such a book as Colquhoun's History of the Police, and see the various tribes of *mud-larks, lumpers, &c.* exercising their depredations, instead of indulging the melancholy with which such scenes of depravity inspire us at first view, I rather wish to consider them as usefully employed in lessening the enormous inequality between the miserable beings who engage in them, and the great commercial speculators, in their way, equally rapacious, against whom their frauds are exercised. It is the intent of Nature that all her children should live, yet she has not made specific provision for them all. The larger cattle graze the meadows, and strong animals subdue their prey, but she has likewise formed a countless number of smaller tribes who have no pasture but the field of others' labours. These watch their time, and pick up the superfluous crumbs of our plenty; they annoy us, we are in a constant state of warfare with them; and

when their audacity arrives at a certain height, we provide effectual checks; in the mean time they live upon our abundance, they admonish us not to let things waste and mould in our barns and storehouses; they are for ever nibbling at our property, living upon the scraps and parings of our festival dainties, hovering about and sipping in our cup, some with insidious stealth, others with bolder warfare; some make us sensible of their sting; the defence of others is their minuteness and insignificance; many tribes of them are got rid of by order and cleanliness; others we keep within certain bounds, but we cannot destroy, without giving up the things which allure them. So it is in human polity. We send the cat after the rat, and the bailiffs after the rogue, but Nature intended all should live. When a rich West India fleet has sailed into the docks, and wealth is flowing in full tides into the crammed coffers of the merchant, can we greatly lament that a small portion of his immense property is by these means diverted from its course, and finds its way to the habitations of penury? Instead, therefore, of feeling strong indignation at these mal-practices, I am apt to say with Burns to the little Mouse:

I doubt na, whiles, but thou mayest
thieve;
What then, poor Beastie! thou must
live.

“The sanctity of oaths and promises is another very essential branch of morality; yet if it were invariably observed by those on whose necks the foot of power is planted, and there were no proportional amelioration in the dis-

positions of those who possess power, a more complete and hopeless tyranny would be exercised, than it is now possible for any despot to maintain. Arbitrary power could never be resisted; for it would begin with imposing sanctions which could not be broken without crime. As taxes and prohibitions could never be evaded, an unprincipled government would feel no limit to its exactions; and that party in society which once happened to be undermost, would be in the situation of a man who has an oath imposed upon him with a pistol at his breast, which he thinks himself bound to observe, however ruinous to his fortune.

“At the same time that we acknowledge the wisdom of Providence in this system of checks, which by evil preserves the race from greater evil, this ought not to shake our principles or alter our ideas of individual morality. Fraud and robbery are not right because other things are worse. A reflecting mind, contemplating the picture from a distance, may feel satisfaction that, by the various channels of imposition and speculation, that property is drawn off and dispersed, which would otherwise stagnate; but if any one among the classes by which such practices are exercised, has by any means formed higher notions of virtue, and a more delicate moral sense, to him they are forbidden; he must starve rather than steal, and trust for his recompence to the conscious purity of his own mind, and to an order of things not found in the present state. An individual cannot do better than by giving a high example of virtue; and if he conceives it, if he is capable of it, it

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is his duty at whatever personal risk. At the same time the rich may be told, that it is in their own power to get rid of many of these grievances whenever they please. It is not sufficiently considered how many virtues depend upon comfort, and cleanliness, and decent apparel. Destroy dirt and misery, and you will destroy at once a great many vices. Provide those accommodations which favour decorum and self-respect, and you have done much to promote female chastity. Let every man know what it is to have property, and you will soon awaken in him a sense of honesty. Make him a citizen, and he will love the constitution to which he belongs, and obey the laws he has helped to make. Educate the poor, inform their minds, and they will have a sense of religion: but if we will not, or cannot do this; if our commerce, or the defence of our territories, or the distinction of ranks, require that large classes shall be sacrificed in these respects; if we must have fleets and armies and crowded work-rooms, the steaming hot-beds of infant depravity; then Nature has said that their vices shall in part repair to them the privations we impose, and soften their state of degradation by rendering them insensible to shame or honour. It is good that in the hovels of the poor there does not exist a nice taste of food, a nice regard to delicacy; it is also, and for the same reason, good, that his moral sense should be in some degree adapted to his circumstances. These considerations may perhaps suggest an additional motive for charitable exertions. I am apt to suspect that the greatest good done by the numerous

societies for the reformation of manners is, by bringing the poor in contact with the rich, by which, as a necessary consequence, many are drawn out of the state of destitute misery in which they were plunged, and placed in more respectable situations. The rich cannot seek the poor without beneficial effects to both parties. The best levelling principle is that philanthropy which is continually at work to smooth and soften the too great inequalities of life, and to present the eye, instead of proud summits and abrupt precipices, with the gentler undulations of hill and vale, with eminences of gradual ascent, and humble but happy vallies.

A. L. B.

REMARKS

On "Thoughts on the Inequality of Conditions."

WE had intended offering some objections to the unsound conclusions of the preceding letter; but upon looking over the volume of the Athenæum from which it is extracted, we find a reply so much in accordance with our own views, and the arguments so forcibly expressed, that we hesitate not to insert it.

"To the Editor of the Athenæum.

"SIR. 'Whatever is, is right,' is a splendid maxim in theology, and which cannot be controverted by one who admits a supreme ruler of the universe, possessed of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness. But however true as a general position, its application in particular instances to account for the existence of what we cannot help regarding as evils, is liable to much speculative difficulty,

and perhaps to some practical inconvenience. If a zealous vindicator of the ways of Providence takes upon himself to set forth in striking colours the good-educed from seeming evil, there may be a danger of discouraging those efforts for the removal of evil in which human wisdom and industry seem most laudably employed. The pious Mahometan, who is convinced that the plague is a kind dispensation of Providence to save half the human species from the worse death by famine, is not likely to use means for stopping its ravages. The same may be said with respect to war, and a number of other evils natural and moral, all of which an ingenious reasoner may show to be attended with some beneficial effects, and may argue that they are therefore within the plan of Providence. But whatever that plan may be (of which we can only form conjectures) it is, I conceive, the business of man to correct, as far as lies in his power, every thing which appears to him in the shape of evil; nor should he readily admit the notion that one evil is a necessary remedy for another.

"These considerations have prevented me from entirely coinciding in opinion with the eloquent and ingenious writer of the paper on the Inequality of Conditions inserted in one of your late numbers, though it contains much that I admire and approve. I think the investigation of those causes which produce a levelling effect in society equally just and acute; but I feel reluctant to admit some of the practical inferences deduced from it. No one is more sensible than myself of the grasping, insatiable, and un-

feeling nature of exorbitant wealth; and no one views with more detestation the conduct of those who, with the exterior of religion and the ostentation of humanity, are ever ready to use all the means in their power for spreading the flames of war, and involving whole nations in calamity, for the sake of some trifling advantage, not to their country, not even to commerce in general, but to their own particular branch of traffic. To see their schemes defeated by a wise and equitable administration would afford me much pleasure, nor should I be sorry to observe their wealth melting away under the burdens and losses which their selfish policy has created. But I confess I view with no satisfaction the defalcations of their overgrown property made by fraud and pillage. A corruption of morals in the lower classes appears to me an evil which no occasional good can compensate; and it is not from emolument acquired in that way that I should expect any beneficial operation towards redressing the inequality with which the good things of life are distributed. Burns's poor mouse, that frugally maintained a family with the gleanings of a full harvest, is, I believe, a very inexact comparison for the *lumper* and *mud-lark*, whose depredations imply an irregular and savage mode of life, and who are probably not less the pests of their own families than of the public. I am not prepared, therefore, to allow that even *ceteris manentibus* a strong principle of honesty in the inferior orders of society would be an evil; for their gains in that case, if less considerable, would be more regular, and more likely to accu-

multate, so as in time to put them in the way of improving their condition. Manufactures and commerce cannot be carried on with success, amid rivalries and competitions, without great encouragements as well to the labouring hand as to the directing head; and in fact, the services of the lower classes are always most amply paid where there is the greatest opportunity of raising large fortunes. I do not regard it as a violation of honesty for the poor to take every allowable method of enhancing the comparative valuation of their services. This is, indeed, a part of 'the secret combination of the poor against the rich,' which your correspondent enumerates among the levelling causes, but justly does not include among *vices*. If Nature has said any thing on this head, it is, that the man who can do for another what that person cannot or will not do for himself, has a right to make the best bargain for his service that he is able to do. Law, indeed, has rendered the combinations of workmen criminal, whilst those of masters are permitted; but in this case it appears to have deviated from equity. I would not pronounce harshly upon what are usually called *impositions* when practised by the low against the high; that is, making advantage of the occasional necessities of the latter; provided they stop short of actual fraud. But whenever the barriers of *meum* and *tuum* are broken down—whenever the poor man takes what he is sensible is not *his own* but *another's* (and he never mistakes in this point), then a depravation of moral character commences, which is the greatest of evils to himself, and surely

cannot be reckoned among the remedial processes employed by Providence, if the views of Providence and of man have any thing in common.

"On the whole, I think your correspondent highly laudable in the attempt to prove to the rich, that they themselves are the causes of much that they complain of in the poor; that it ought to be their aim to soften and alleviate the inequality of conditions by approximation, rather than aggravate it by the exertions of power; and that as long as they continue to monopolize the advantages of life, vice, among other things, will rise up to redress the injury. But this vice appears to me an *additional* evil, which all means should be employed to combat, even though the state of things in other respects remain the same.

Yours, &c. DEMOPHILUS."

PHILOSOPHICAL NECES- SITY.

[From the Newcastle Magazine, for May 1821.]

FROM a just and complete view of all the circumstances in which an intelligent being is placed, could he, in any moment of his existence, have acted otherwise than he has acted? *Ans.* No.

To justify this answer, it will be proper to attend to the evidence of our experience on the subject, as, in fact, no physical or moral problem can be accurately and philosophically solved in any other manner.

The different actions of men may be comprised under four; 1. Perception; 2. Judging; 3. Volition; and 4. Acting.

1. PERCEPTION.—That we must

perceive what we do perceive, is indisputable—the ideas of reflection arising spontaneously in the mind, according to their order in the chain of association, we cannot reject them. Nor can we avoid using our senses when awake, whereby we as necessarily receive the ideas of sensation; and as we necessarily receive ideas, so each idea is necessarily what it is in our mind—it being impossible to make anything different from itself.

2. **JUDGING.**—The various appearances of propositions being founded on our capacity, and the degree of light in which they stand to us, we can no more change those appearances in us, than we can change the idea of red raised in us; nor can we judge contrary to those appearances, without misbelieving what is demonstrated to our understanding—which is absolutely impossible.

3. **VOLITION.**—This is not a vague or independent faculty, operating arbitrarily, but an act consequent on the understanding representing one thing as being more advantageous to our interest than another. Wherefore, as we judge of the truth and falsehood according to appearances, so we **MUST** will or prefer as things seem to us, unless we can be indifferent to our own happiness.

4. **ACTING.**—Here we experience perfect necessity, finding we always do those actions we will, unless hindered by some intervening cause; and however frequently we may change our will, we still continue necessitated to obey the dictates of our last will or choice.

Hence it evidently follows, that all our actions are the inevitable effects of our wills; and that all

our wills, or judgements, are either the immediate results, or necessary consequences, of impressions unavoidably received.

It is objected by the partisans of liberty, That the mind, in adopting a volition, is self-determined;—but this only proves, that every choice we make has been chosen by us, and that every act of the mind has been preceded and produced by another act of the mind. Nor is the plea of indifference less absurd; for motives must either have a necessary and irresistible force, or they can have none.

Religionists must observe, that the hypothesis of liberty destroys all faith in the divine prescience; for the certainty of such knowledge can depend only on the certainty of the thing known.

A position equally unassailable is, that if the Deity, by the perfection and rectitude of his will, **NECESSARILY** determined to do always what is best upon the whole, so that he could not but adopt what he has adopted, neither is he a **FREE** agent.

It is sufficiently obvious that a perception of preferableness, or desirableness, irresistibly leads to animal motion; the term **FREE AGENT**, therefore, is totally inapplicable to voluntary actions.

The whole system of free will is founded upon a misunderstanding of words, by making a distinction between the intellectual and active powers of the mind, when, in reality, there exists no real difference. Were it accurately understood that the will is merely the last act of the understanding, the conjunction of moral antecedents and consequents could not be denied; but ignorance of the true import of words

has proved an eternal source of error and contention.

The following beneficial consequences are deducible from the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity.

1. It tends to correct the language of morality, by excluding all ideas of contingency and accident with which it is universally tainted; this is an important consequence of necessity—accuracy of language being the indispensable pre-requisite of all sound knowledge.

2. It dignifies science, and generates capacity, by ascertaining the necessary and intimate connexion which subsists between eminent virtue and a powerful understanding.

3. It counteracts a spirit of indifference and neutrality, by demonstrating that no action is absolutely insulated—good ones producing a happy series of consequences, and bad ones an inevitable series of evil consequences.

4. It obviously imparts just conceptions of moral discipline, by evincing that all crime is error of the understanding.

5. It annihilates all sentiments of resentment and indignation against those who fall into the commission of vice, and substitutes that disapprobation of mental error which we usually feel of an infectious disorder.

6. He who regards all things past, present, and to come, as links of an indissoluble chain, will, as often as he thinks of this comprehensive view, be superior to the tumults of passion; and will also reflect upon the moral concerns of mankind with the same clearness of perception, the same unalterable firmness of judgement,

and the same tranquillity that we are accustomed to do upon the truths of geometry!

Analogous to the foregoing remarks is the following passage from Mr. Owen's "Essays on the Formation of Character,"

"Every day will make it more and more evident that the character of man is, without a single exception, always formed for him; that it may be, and is, chiefly, created by his predecessors; that they give him, or may give him, his ideas and habits, which are the powers that govern and direct his conduct. Man, therefore, never did, nor is it possible he ever can, form his own character.

"The knowledge of this important fact has not been derived from any of the wild and heated speculations of an ardent and ungoverned imagination; on the contrary, it proceeds from a long and patient study of the theory and practice of human nature, under many varied circumstances; it will be found to be a deduction drawn from such a multiplicity of facts as to afford the most complete demonstration.

"Had not mankind been misinstructed from infancy on this subject, making it necessary that they should unlearn what they have been taught, the simple statement of this truth would render it instantaneously obvious to every rational mind. Men would know that their predecessors might have given them the habits of ferocious cannibalism, or of the highest known benevolence and intelligence: and by the acquirement of this knowledge they would soon learn that, as parents, preceptors, and legislators united, they pos-

sess the means of training the rising generations to either of those extremes ; that they may with the greatest certainty make them the conscientious worshipers of Juggernaut, or of the most pure spirit possessing the essence of every excellence which the human imagination can conceive ; that they may train the young to become effeminate, deceitful, ignorantly selfish, intemperate, revengeful, murderous,—of course ignorant, irrational, and miserable ; or to be manly, just, generous, temperate, active, kind, and benevolent,—that is intelligent, rational, and happy. The knowledge of these principles having been derived from facts which perpetually exist, they defy ingenuity itself to confute them ; nay, the most severe scrutiny will make it evident that they are utterly unassailable.

"Is it then wisdom to think and to act in opposition to the facts which hourly exhibit themselves around us, and in direct contradiction to the evidence of our senses ? Inquire of the most learned and wise of the present day, ask them to speak with sincerity, and they will tell you that they have long known the principles on which society has been founded to be false. Hitherto, however, the tide of public opinion in all countries has been directed by a combination of prejudice, bigotry, and fanaticism, derived from the wildest imaginations of ignorance ; and the most enlightened men have not dared to expose those errors which to them were offensive, prominent, and glaring.

"Happily for man, this reign of ignorance rapidly approaches to dissolution ; its terrors are al-

ready on the wing, and soon they will be compelled to take their flight, never more to return. For now the knowledge of the existing errors is not only possessed by the learned and reflecting, but it is spreading far and wide throughout society ; and ere long it will be fully comprehended even by the most ignorant.

"Attempts may indeed be made by individuals, who through ignorance mistake their real interests, to retard the progress of this knowledge ; but as it will prove itself to be in unison with the evidence of our senses, and therefore true beyond the possibility of disproof, it cannot be impeded, and in its course will overwhelm all opposition.

"These principles, however, are not more true in theory than beneficial in practice, whenever they are properly applied. Why then, should all their substantial advantages be longer withheld from the mass of mankind ? Can it, by possibility, be a crime to pursue the only practical means which a rational being can adopt to diminish the misery of man, and increase his happiness ?

"These questions, of the deepest interest to society, are now brought to the fair test of public experiment. It remains to be proved, whether the character of man shall continue to be formed under the guidance of the most inconsistent notions, the errors of which for centuries past have been manifest to every reflecting rational mind ; or whether it shall be moulded under the direction of uniformly consistent principles, derived from the unvarying facts of the creation ; principles, the truth of which no sane man will now attempt to deny.

"It is then by the full and complete disclosure of these principles, that the destruction of ignorance and misery is to be effected, and the reign of reason, intelligence, and happiness, is to be firmly established."

REMARKS ON THE SELFISH THEORY OF MORALS.

[From the *New Harmony Gazette*.]

It seems curious, that while all writers agree that human beings congregate in organized societies, in order that, by so doing, as much as possible of happiness may be enjoyed, so many writers deem it impossible for human beings when thus congregated for this purpose, to act otherwise than in direct contravention of the purpose of their congregating, by a never-ceasing endeavour to produce the happiness of one being, self, at the sacrifice of no matter how much greater happiness, on the part of no matter how many other beings.

If the case do stand thus, what a living paradox is man!

But, I think the case stands otherwise. I think that the young human being is susceptible of being trained to act, with tolerable uniformity, in accordance with the object of human society, which is the production of the greatest sum of happiness, and the consequent sacrifice of the less to the greater happiness, whenever a sacrifice is necessary.

I need not add, that the growth

of human feeling is now unremittingly cherished, from infancy, in quite an opposite direction. The selfishness of the little being, nurtured without ceasing by the constant application of the stimuli of praise and blame, and the very possibility of social feeling is prevented, by a persevering inculcation of the isolating maxim, that 'honesty is the best policy!' Monstrous! to state, as the only reason for producing a greater happiness, that a less happiness will be its consequent! How consummate the selfishness, how exquisite the egotism, that will listen to, and act upon, such a reason! But this far-famed maxim is, truly, as false as it is isolating. The production of the greater happiness is not always compatible with the production of the less. The sacrifice of the happiness of one being, may be indispensable to the procuring of a greater happiness to several other beings. In such a case, the one being may aim at producing his own happiness, or he may aim at producing the happiness of the several other beings; he may endeavour to produce the less happiness, or he may endeavour to produce the greater happiness; he may be politic, or he may be honest; but, unless honesty and policy be synonymous and the maxim a mere truism, honesty is not, in this case, the best policy, and the maxim is a falsehood.

JAMES RICHARDSON.
Memphis, May 17, 1828.